

AN ANALYSIS OF RECIDIVISM RATES
AMONG RESIDENTS RELEASED FROM
MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS
DURING THE YEAR 1974

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ABSTRACT

The present study contains an analysis of differential recidivism rates for individuals released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions during the year 1974. Incorporated in the analysis is a series of comparisons between the findings of the 1974 releases and previous findings from the analysis of releasee populations in the years 1966, 1971, 1972 and 1973.

Our analysis revealed that many of the basic trends isolated in previous recidivism studies by the Department of Correction continue to occur. For example, it is clear that in recent years rates of recidivism have dropped for releases from Massachusetts State Correctional Institutions. For releases in the year 1966, the mean rate of recidivism was 30%; for 1971, it was 25%; for 1972, 22%; for 1973, 19%; and for 1974, 19%. Since the rates for 1973 and 1974 are the same, evidence of a possible leveling off of the downward trend exists.

A second major finding of our analysis was that strong evidence exists which demonstrates that Furlough Program participation is an important variable in accounting for the reduction in recidivism that has occurred in Massachusetts over the past few years. For individuals who have received furloughs prior to release from prison, a significantly lower rate of recidivism occurs. Our analysis indicated that this reduction in recidivism is due to the impact of the Furlough Program and not to the types of inmates who were selected for furloughs. This finding also occurred in the analysis of the releasee cohort for the year 1973.

A third major finding was that the security level of the institution from which an individual is released has a bearing on the chances that the individual will recidivate. Individuals released from minimum security institutions and pre-release centers have a significantly lower probability of recidivating than do individuals released directly from maximum and medium security institutions. Individuals released directly from

maximum security institutions have the highest probability of recidivating. Again, our analysis revealed that this recidivism differential held even after we controlled for selection factors.

A fourth major finding, documented in research studies on prior releasee populations, was that a shift has occurred concerning the proportion of recidivists in the various categories of return. Specifically, a lower proportion of recidivists are being returned for a technical violation of parole conditions. Instead, the category of return is more likely to be for reason of a new arrest or for receiving a new commitment from the courts. We attribute the decrease in the number of parole revocations for reason of a technical infraction of parole rules to the implementation of the Morrissey Vs. Brewer decision. This trend must be taken into account as also having an impact on the rates of recidivism for recent years.

Analysis concludes that the drop in rates of recidivism that has recently occurred for releasees from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions is attributable in the interactive effects of three events. These events are: (1) the introduction of the Furlough Program; (2) the introduction of graduated release programs (pre-release centers, half-way houses, work release programs, and education-release programs); and (3) the implementation of the Morrissey Vs. Brewer decision in the parole revocation process.

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INTRODUCTION

With the passage of the Correctional Reform Act of 1972, a wide variety of programmatic changes were introduced to the Massachusetts Department of Correction. The Act allowed for the creation of pre-release centers, halfway houses and a home furlough program. In addition, it provided for the expansion of work and education release programs. Coordinated with the introduction of the various reintegration programs was an extensive effort to develop and carry out careful research evaluations for each of the individual components within the network. The purposes of the research evaluations were twofold: first, research evaluations were designed to provide operational feedback for program administrators; secondly, research evaluations were designed to measure the rehabilitative effectiveness of the programs as correctional devices.

As part of this continuing effort of research evaluation, the Research Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Correction has been producing a series of studies of recidivism rates. The first study produced dealt with releases from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions during the year 1971.¹ That study was meant to serve as a base comparison for subsequent studies in that the releasee population left the system just prior to the implementation of the Correctional Reform Act and thus prior to the introduction of the various community-based correctional programs. Subsequent recidivism studies were produced for releases in the years 1972 and 1973.² These latter studies contained populations that had to varying degrees participated in programs created by the Correctional Reform Act of 1972. In addition, a series of recidivism studies have been produced on individual pre-release centers and half-way houses.³

Several striking findings emerged from these studies that we believe have wide range theoretical and, more importantly, administrative policy implications:

First, it is clear that a consistent reduction in recidivistic behavior is occurring in Massachusetts. For releases in the year 1966, the mean rate of recidivism was 30%; for 1971, it was 25%; for 1972, 22%; and for 1973, 19%. This trend, however, is not peculiar to the state of Massachusetts. For example, Martinson and Wilks (October, 1976) have recently presented evidence that the same trend is occurring nationally.

Secondly, the studies have revealed that participation in the furlough program seemed to be the most important variable in accounting for the reduction of recidivism rates that has occurred in Massachusetts. When the selection factor was controlled for, the relationship held as strong.

Thirdly, the studies found that participation in pre-release programs prior to reintroduction to community life, led to the lowest rate of recidivism. This was true even when selection factors were held constant.

Fourthly, related to the finding discussed above, analyses revealed that individuals released from prison directly from medium or minimum security institutions (which includes pre-release centers) had significantly lower rates of recidivism than did those individuals released directly from a maximum security institution. This finding, also documented in previous Departmental recidivism studies, suggests a reintegrative or rehabilitative quality in the movement from maximum to medium to minimum security levels, as opposed to an abrupt release directly from a maximum security institution.

The above findings provided support for the recently enacted community-based correctional network of programs in Massachusetts: Pre-Release Centers, Halfway Houses, Work and Education Release Programs, Co-educational Institutions, and most importantly, the Furlough Program.

In order to study further the trends cited above, the Research Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Correction recently collected data describing the background characteristics and the recidivism rates for all individuals released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions in the year 1974. These statistics are available for releasees from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions (MCI's) Walpole and Concord (maximum security institutions); MCI Norfolk (medium security institution); and Forestry Camps and Pre-Release Centers (minimum security institutions). In addition, statistics are available on MCI Framingham--the Department's co-educational institution. MCI-Framingham functions as a maximum, medium and minimum security institution.

The present paper provides a narrative overview of some of the more striking preliminary findings that have thus far emerged from the data analysis. Throughout the discussion of findings, comparisons will be made between the 1974 material and the recidivism material of previous years. Therefore, the patterns uncovered in previous studies of recidivism rates will be explored in the present analysis in an effort to determine whether or not trends initially identified continue over time.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Definition of Recidivism:

A recidivist was defined as any subject who was returned to a Federal or State correctional institution or to a County House of Correction or Jail for 30 days or more.

Follow-up Period:

The follow-up period was one year from the date of the subjects' release to the community.

Variables Collected:

For the analyses that follow in this report, five categories of variables were collected: Commitment Variables, Personal Background Characteristics Variables, Criminal History Variables, Furlough Variables, and Recidivism Variables. A specific listing of variables is given in Appendix I.

Data was primarily derived from the computerized data base developed by the Correction and Parole Management Information System. Additional data was collected from the files of the Department of Correction, the Parole Board, and the Board of Probation. All data was analyzed on the Massachusetts State College Computer Network.

FINDINGS

A total of 911 individuals were released to the street from Massachusetts' State Correctional Institutions in the year 1974. Of the 911 individuals so released, 740 (81%) were not returned to a correctional institution within one year of their release. The remaining 171 individuals (19%) were reincarcerated for at least 30 days within one year of their release. Thus, the overall rate of recidivism, with a one year follow-up period, was 19%.

Recidivism Rates for individual institutions ranged from a high of 27% for MCI-Concord to a low of 7% for the combined Forestry Camp populations. A breakdown of the Recidivism Rates for individual institutions is summarized below in Table I.

TABLE I
RECIDIVISM RATE BY RELEASING INSTITUTIONS, 1974

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASEES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDI- VISM RATE</u>
Concord	282	(31)	27%
Walpole	136	(15)	22%
Norfolk	130	(14)	19%
Framingham - Men	19	(2)	16%
Framingham - Women	56	(6)	11%
Pre-Release	226	(25)	12%
Forestry Camps	62	(7)	7%
TOTAL	911	(100)	19%

In terms of specific pre-release centers, considerable variation occurs when a comparison between centers is made. This trend is presented below in Table III.

TABLE III
RECIDIVISM RATES OF INDIVIDUAL PRE-RELEASE CENTERS

	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Shirley Pre-Release	73	(32)	21%
Boston State Pre- Release	75	(33)	7%
Roxbury Community Rehabilitation Center	27	(12)	11%
Charlotte House	14	(6)	14%
Coolidge House	16	(7)	6%
Brooke House	18	(8)	11%
Temporary Housing	3	(1)	0%
<u>TOTAL PRE-RELEASE</u>	226	(100)	12%

Prior research has demonstrated that the variation in recidivism rates among individual pre-release centers is a function of the risk potential of the population that particular center draws upon. All pre-release centers had lower actual recidivism rates than their expected recidivism. (See footnote #3 for a listing of these studies).

When the overall recidivism rate for the releases in the year 1974 is compared with the rates of previous years, one finds that the rates are possibly beginning to stabilize in the years 1973 and 1974. When considering individual institutions, however, variations continue to occur each year. Specifically, three major institutional fluctuations have occurred between the recidivism rates in 1973 and 1974. First, the recidivism rate for MCI-Norfolk increased in the year 1974. Secondly, the recidivism rates for Forestry Camps dropped in 1974. Thirdly, the recidivism rate for MCI-Framingham dropped in 1974. However, none of the rate fluctuations was statistically significant.

A summary of the comparative recidivism rates for the years 1966 through 1974 is presented below in Table II.

TABLE II

COMPARATIVE RECIDIVISM RATES FOR YEARS 1966-1974

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CONCORD</u>	<u>WALPOLE</u>	<u>NORFOLK</u>	<u>FRAMINGHAM</u>	<u>PRE-RELEASE</u>	<u>FORESTRY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1966	30%	33%	28%	32%	- -	27%	30%
1971	28%	27%	18%	29%	-	14%	25%
1972	27%	21%	15%	18%	-	14%	22%
1973	26%	21%	14%	17%	12%	14%	19%
1974	27%	22%	19%	12%	12%	7%	19%

Specific Category of Recidivism for Releases in the Year 1974:

It is important to examine the specific categories of return to prison covered under the term recidivism. For example, it is noteworthy that 40 individuals or 23% of the total 171 recidivists in the sample were re-incarcerated for reason of a technical infraction of their parole conditions. They did not have a new arrest associated with their parole violation. Eighty-five individuals, or 49% of the total 171 recidivists, were re-incarcerated because a new arrest was associated with their parole violation, although at the time of their re-incarceration they may not have been tried for this new arrest. Forty-seven of the 171 recidivists (27%) were re-incarcerated as a result of a new conviction; i.e., received a new sentence from the court. These figures are summarized in Table IV below:

TABLE IV

RECIDIVISM BREAKDOWN FOR RELEASES IN 1974 BY CATEGORY OF RETURN

	WALPOLE		CONCORD		NORFOLK		FORESTRY		PRE-RELEASE		FRAMING- HAM MEN		FRAMING- HAM WOMEN		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non Recidivists	106	(78)	205	(73)	106	(82)	58	(9)	198	(88)	16	(84)	50	(89)	739	(81)
RECIDIVISTS																
Parole Violation, Technical	14	(10)	16	(6)	3	(2)	0	(0)	5	(2)	1	(5)	1	(2)	40	(4)
Parole Violation, New Arrest	9	(7)	38	(13)	15	(12)	2	(3)	16	(7)	2	(11)	3	(5)	85	(9)
New Court Com- mitments	7	(5)	23	(8)	6	(5)	2	(3)	7	(3)	0	(0)	2	(4)	47	(5)
TOTAL	136	(100)	282	(100)	130	(100)	62	(100)	226	(100)	19	(100)	56	(100)	911	(100)

When we compare the data on the basic categories of return with patterns found in previous years, the results are similar to the material for 1972 and 1973 releases. In the 1972 releasee cohort, research revealed that a considerable shift had occurred among the various categories of return. For example, it was discovered that:

- (1) A lower proportion of returns for reason of a technical violation of their parole conditions occurred for the 1972 cohort. Whereas 22% of the recidivists in the 1972 releasee cohort were returned for reason of a technical violation of parole, 43% of the 1971 releasee cohort were returned for this reason.
- (2) A higher proportion of returns for reason of a new arrest associated with their parole revocation occurred for the 1972 releasee cohort. Whereas 55% of the recidivists in the 1972 releasee cohort were returned for reason of a new arrest associated with their parole revocation, 47% of the 1971 releasee cohort were returned for this reason.
- (3) A higher proportion of returns for reason of receiving a new commitment from the courts occurred for the 1972 releasee cohort. Whereas 23% of the recidivists in the 1972 releasee cohort were returned on a new commitment from the courts, 10% of the 1971 releasee cohort were returned for this reason.

In summary, research on the 1972 releasee cohort revealed that a change in type of return had occurred over patterns documented in prior years. Individuals returned to prison were less apt to be returned for reason of a technical violation of their parole. Instead, the reason of return was more apt to be for a new arrest or for a new court commitment.

Research on the 1973 releasee cohort further substantiated this pattern and therefore pointed to a possible stabilization of this trend. Research on the 1974 releasee cohort also contained similar results. These findings are summarized in Table V below:

TABLE V

BREAKDOWN OF RECIDIVISM BY CATEGORY OF RETURN FOR
YEARS 1966, 1971, 1972, 1973, AND 1974

	1966*	1971	1972	1973	1974
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Non-Recidivists	648 (70)	835 (75)	1204 (78)	780 (81)	739 (81)
Recidivists:					
Parole Violation, Technical	93 (10)	118 (11)	76 (5)	65 (7)	40 (4)
Parole Violation, New Arrest	96 (11)	128 (12)	190 (12)	85 (9)	85 (9)
New Commitments	81 (9)	26 (2)	80 (5)	36 (4)	47 (5)
TOTAL	918 (100)	1107 (100)	1550 (100)	966 (100)	911 (100)

The implication of the above finding is that fewer individuals who have been paroled from adult state correctional institutions in Massachusetts are being returned to prison for the single reason of a technical violation of parole rules. Instead, for the releases in the year 1972, 1973 and 1974, when a parole is revoked, it is more apt to be for reason of a new arrest.

A possible explanation for this occurrence is that the effects of the Morrissey vs. Brewer decision are now being felt in Massachusetts. In June of 1972, the United States Supreme Court handed down the Morrissey vs. Brewer decision which required that certain changes be made in the parole revocation process. Specifically, the decision meant that two parole revocation hearings had to be held before a final revocation action could be taken. The purpose of the first hearing was to determine whether there was probable cause to remove the parolee from the street; the purpose of the second hearing was to determine whether there was justification to revoke his parole.

The decision took effect in the state of Massachusetts on October 16, 1972. Since the 1972 releases were followed in the community for one full year, all parolees in the sample were on parole status for at least a portion of time subsequent to the new policy taking effect. Such is also the case for 1973 and 1974. It would therefore be safe to assume that the decrease in the number of revokes for reason of a technical infraction of parole rules may be interwoven with the effects of the application of Morrissey vs. Brewer decision in Massachusetts. As due process was applied to the parole revocation process, it is possible that many of the less serious technical violation infractions no longer led to a full revocation and return.

Recidivism Rates By Committing Institution:

In the Massachusetts Criminal Justice System, the courts make direct commitments to three institutions. Women are committed to MCI-Framingham, and men are committed to either MCI-Concord or MCI-Walpole. In the case of men sentenced to MCI-Concord, the judge does not fix a specific term. The individual is sentenced to the authority of the superintendent without a minimum sentence and the maximum sentence is established by statute. Traditionally, Concord sentences are for individuals with less length criminal histories and, therefore, tend to be younger offenders. In the case of men sentenced to MCI-Walpole, the judge must fix both a minimum and a maximum term (except for life sentences and sentences for habitual offenders). The minimum must not be for less than two and a half years; the maximum not more than that established by statute.

Men are not committed directly by the court to MCI-Norfolk, Forestry Camps, MCI-Framingham or Pre-Release Centers. Instead, they are received only on transfer after having been carefully screened as both eligible and suitable for a medium and/or minimum security status.

In view of these distinctions, the 1974 releasee sample was analyzed in terms of the institution to which each sample member was originally committed. Of the 911 releases in 1974, 70 (8%) individuals had been originally committed to MCI-Framingham and had a recidivism rate of 11%; 506 (56%) had been originally committed to MCI-Concord and had a recidivism rate of 23%; and 335 (37%) had been originally committed to MCI-Walpole and had a recidivism rate of 15%. These results are summarized in Table VI below:

TABLE VI
RECIDIVISM RATE BY COMMITTING INSTITUTION

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
MCI-Framingham	70	(8)	11%
MCI-Concord	506	(56)	23%
MCI-Walpole	335	(37)	15%
TOTAL	911	(100)	19%

From the results presented in Table VI, two patterns should be pointed out: first, it is noteworthy that more than half (56%) of the total releasee population had been originally sentenced to MCI-Concord, and secondly, that the MCI-Concord commitments had the higher recidivism rates.

Differential Recidivism Rates for Committing Institutions by Institution of Release:

As part of an evaluation of rates of recidivism for releases from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions in 1971, a report was issued in May of 1975 which documented an interesting trend concerning Walpole commitments. It was reported that when the 1971 releasee population was analyzed in terms of the sample members' original commitment institution cross-tabulated by his institution of release, a particular pattern existed for Walpole commitments. Specifically, analysis revealed that for individuals originally committed to MCI-Walpole, differential rates of recidivism occurred in accordance with the particular institution from which they were released. Walpole commitments who were transferred to and subsequently released from other Massachusetts Correctional Institutions had significantly lower rates of recidivism than those who remained at MCI-Walpole (or those who were transferred from MCI-Walpole but who were subsequently returned and released from MCI-Walpole).

The author of the report hypothesized that the differential rates of recidivism for the MCI-Walpole commitments by institution of release might be accounted for by either of two explanations: (1) low recidivist risks may have been selected for transfer to the lower custody institutions; or (2) there is a reintegrative or rehabilitative quality in the movement from maximum to medium and to minimum security levels as opposed to an abrupt release directly from a maximum security institution to the street.

In order to test the above hypotheses, the Massachusetts Department of Correction's Research Unit conducted a separate study that attempted to determine if either of the two explanations was, in fact, correct. In this study, Base Expectancy Tables were developed and applied to the portion of the MCI-Walpole commitments in the sample that were transferred to and released from MCI's Norfolk, and Forestry Camps to determine whether or not lower recidivist risks groups were selected disproportionately.

After carrying out the study, the author concluded that evidence supports the hypothesis that there is a reintegrative or rehabilitative quality in the movement from maximum to medium and to minimum security levels as opposed to an abrupt release directly from a maximum security institution.⁴

These findings were further substantiated by the data for the releases in the years 1972 and 1973. Though analysis of the 1974 data generally supported these previous research findings, one important change was discovered. Specifically, Walpole commitments released from medium security institutions no longer had lower rates of recidivism than those released from maximum security.

This finding is partially explained by a recent pattern of greater movement from medium security to minimum security prior to final release. Whereas in previous years approximately 40% of the Walpole commitments were released from medium security institutions and 24% were released from minimum security institutions; in the year 1974, only 21% of the Walpole commitments were released from medium security institutions and 39% were released from minimum security institutions. The selection procedures moved a greater number of individuals into minimum security status (including pre-release centers) without increasing the overall recidivism rates of the total releasee population.

The data, however, strongly supports the hypothesis that for Walpole commitments the lower the security status of the releasing institution the lower the recidivism rate will be. The data further reveals that by increasing the number of individuals released from minimum security, including pre-release centers, no increase in rates of recidivism occurred. The data supporting these findings as presented below in Table VII :

TABLE VII
RECIDIVISM RATE OF WALPOLE COMMITMENTS BY
INSTITUTION OF RELEASE, 1974

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
MCI-Walpole	129	(39)	20%
MCI-Norfolk	71	(21)	21%
MCI-Concord	5	(1)	20%
Forestry Camps	34	(10)	3%
Framingham Men	10	(3)	0%
Pre-Release	86	(26)	8%
TOTAL	335	(100)	15%

A breakdown of MCI-Concord commitments by institution of release is presented in Table VIII below. Again, one can see that in general the higher the security level of the institution of release the higher is the rate of recidivism. Conversely, the lower the security level of the institution of release the lower the rate of recidivism. This point is illustrated by the following security level categories:

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Concord Commitments Released from Maximum Security Institutions	284	28%
Concord Commitments released from Medium Security Institutions	59	15%
Concord Commitments released from Minimum Security Institutions	37	16%
Concord Commitments released from pre- release centers	126	15%

The specific institutions and their recidivism rates are presented below in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

RECIDIVISM RATES OF CONCORD COMMITMENTS
BY INSTITUTION OF RELEASE, 1974 COHORT

<u>RELEASING INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASEES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
MCI-Concord	277	(55)	27%
MCI-Walpole	7	(1)	57%
MCI-Norfolk	59	(12)	15%
MCI-Framingham	9	(2)	33%
MCI-Forestry	28 -	(6)	11%
Pre-Release Centers	126	(25)	15%
TOTAL	506	(100)	23%

DIFFERENTIAL RECIDIVISM RATES BY SECURITY
LEVEL OF INSTITUTION OF RELEASE

An interesting pattern found in the 1974 releasee cohort concerned the differential recidivism rate according to the specific security level of the institution from which the individual was released. Generally, it was found that the higher the security level of the institution from which the individual was released, the higher was the rate of recidivism. Conversely, the lower the security level of the institution of release, the lower the recidivism rate. This finding also documented in previous departmental recidivism studies, suggests a reintegrative quality in the movement from maximum to medium to minimum security levels, as opposed to an abrupt release directly from a maximum security institution. This reintegrative quality translates into lower rates of recidivism.

However, the selection process for moving individuals from high to low security levels may have worked in such a way that low recidivism risks are disproportionately chosen for lower security levels. Therefore, a test controlling for selective factors is necessary before we can conclusively state the relationship between security level of release and recidivism rates. As was the case in analyzing the furlough data, the use of Base Expectancy Prediction Tables was chosen as the device for holding selection factors constant. Again the pattern was investigated by applying the Base Expectancy Tables to the male population only - since there are only two releasing institutions for women - MCI-Framingham and Charlotte House Pre-Release Center - and the total women population was too small for differential statistical analysis.

Analysis began by dividing the male releasee population into the specific security level category of the releasing institution. Releases from MCI's Concord and Walpole were placed in the maximum security level category; releases from MCI-Norfolk were placed in the medium security level category; and releases from Forestry Camps and the male section of MCI-Framingham were placed in the minimum security category. Releases from pre-release centers formed the final and lowest security level category. Both the actual and the expected recidivism rates were calculated for each category group and a chi square goodness of fit test was used to compare the expected and actual recidivism rates.

Analysis revealed that the total male releasee population had an expected recidivism rate of 24.6%. However, the actual recidivism rate for the total male population was 20%. This drop of 4.6 percentage points was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

When the various categories of security level of release were analyzed in terms of differences between expected and actual recidivism rates, we found that for all categories the actual rate was lower than the expected rate. However, the differences found with the maximum and medium security levels were not statistically significant. By contrast the reduction in recidivism found for minimum security institutions and for pre-release centers were statistically significant. We conclude from this analysis that the security level from which an individual is released has a bearing on the chances of that individual recidivating. Individuals released from minimum security institutions or pre-release centers have a significantly lower probability of recidivating than do individuals released from maximum or medium security institutions. Individuals released from maximum security institutions have the highest probability of recidivating. This finding is in direct support of previous departmental recidivism studies. All suggest a reintegrative quality in the movement from maximum to medium to minimum security levels, as opposed to an abrupt release directly from a maximum security institution. As stated previously, the reintegrative quality translates into lower rates of recidivism. Our analysis indicates that the reduction in recidivism was not due to the types of inmates who were selected for movement to lower security levels but instead was due to the graduated release process.

The results of differential security-level analysis is summarized below as Table IX:

TABLE IX

DIFFERENTIAL RECIDIVISM RATES BY SECURITY LEVEL OF
INSTITUTION OF RELEASE FOR MALE POPULATION

<u>SECURITY</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASES</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION</u>	<u>EXPECTED RE- CIDIVISM RATE</u>	<u>ACTUAL RE- CIDIVISM RATE</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>	<u>GOODNESS OF FIT TEST</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL</u>
Maximum Security	418	(50)	27.9%	26%	-1.9	$\chi^2=1.10$ $p>.05$	Not statis- tically sig- nificant
Medium Security	130	(15)	21.1%	19%	-2.1	$\chi^2=0.54$ $p>.05$	not statis- tically sig- nificant
Minimum Security	81	(10)	22.1%	9%	-13.5	$\chi^2=8.52$ $p<.01$	statistical- ly signifi- cant
Pre-Release	212	(25)	21.1%	12%	-9.1	$\chi^2=9.88$ $p<.01$	statistical- ly signifi- cant
TOTAL MALE	841	(100)	24.6%	20%	-4.6	$\chi^2=11.79$ $p<.001$	Statistical- ly signifi- cant

Recidivism Rate by Type of Release:

The 1974 releasee cohort was next analyzed in terms of differential recidivism rates by category of type of release. The sample was sub-divided into the two categories of release: (1) parole, and (2) discharge. From Table x below, it can be seen that for all releasing institutions individuals who were released on parole had significantly higher rates of recidivism than individuals who were released on discharge.

One clear reason why it would be expected for individuals receiving a discharge to have lower rates of recidivism is that such dischargees would not be returned for parole violations since they are not on parole status. Dischargees may only be returned for reason of receiving a new sentence on a new offense. Also, by virtue of being on parole, parolees are under closer supervision so that criminal violations are likely to be more readily detected.

TABLE X
TYPE OF RELEASE

OF RELEASE	MCI WALPOLE			MCI NORFOLK			MCI CONCORD			FORESTRY CAMPS			MCI-MEN FRAMINGHAM			MCI-WOMEN FRAMINGHAM			PRE- RELEASE			TOTAL RELEASES		
	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR	N	%	RR
Small	110	(81)	26	115	(89)	17	244	(87)	30	55	(89)	7	18	(95)	17	30	(54)	13	220	(97)	13	792	(87)	20
Large	26	(19)	8	15	(12)	27	38	(14)	13	7	(11)	0	1	(5)	0	26	(46)	8	6	(3)	0	119	(13)	11
	136	(100)	22	130	(100)	19	282	(100)	27	62	(100)	7	19	(100)	16	56	(100)	11	226	(100)	12	911	(100)	19

FURLOUGH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Those individuals who had experienced one or more furloughs prior to their release from prison had significantly lower rates of recidivism than did individuals who had not experienced a furlough prior to release.

Of the total number of individuals released from prison in the year 1974, 237 (26%) had not received a furlough while incarcerated. Their recidivism rate was 30%. By contrast, the 674 (74%) individuals who did experience a furlough before release had a recidivism rate of 15%. Those individuals experiencing a furlough prior to release had significant lower recidivism rates than individuals who had not. Furthermore, the difference was statistically significant. These results are summarized in Table XI, below.

TABLE XI

Recidivism Rate Broken Down
by Participation in Furlough Program

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Recidivism Rate</u>
Did not receive a furlough	237	(26)	30%
Received a furlough	674	(74)	15%
TOTAL SAMPLE	911	(100)	19%

The furlough data is interesting in that a larger proportion of the releases in 1974 received furloughs than was true in 1973 and the recidivism rate for individuals receiving a furlough in 1974 was even lower in 1974 than 1973. That is, 69% of the releasees in 1973 received a furlough and had a recidivism rate of 17%; whereas 74% of the releasees in 1974 received a furlough and had a recidivism rate of 15%.

When the furlough variable is broken down by the specific institution of release, variation occurs in differential recidivism rates. All individual institutions with the exception of MCI-Norfolk, show higher recidivism rates for those individuals not receiving a furlough. For MCI-Norfolk, individuals who had received furloughs had higher recidivism rates than those who did not. However, this relationship was found to be not statistically significant. These results are summarized below in Table XII:

In interpreting the results from the analysis of the furlough participation variable, it is important to realize that the selection process for granting furloughs to individuals may work in such a way that low recidivism risks are disproportionately chosen to receive furloughs and high risks disproportionately excluded. In order to ascertain the validity of the finding that having received a furlough reduces the incidence of recidivistic behavior, a test for possible selection biases is necessary. This was accomplished through the use of Base Expectancy Prediction Tables by which an expected recidivism rate is calculated and then compared to the actual recidivism rate. The Base Expectancy Table was constructed on the population of inmates released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions in the year 1971. This population was chosen because it represents a period in time just prior to the introduction of the furlough program (as well as the introduction of pre-release and other community correctional programs) in Massachusetts. Thus no one in this total release population had received a furlough.

TABLE XII

RECIDIVISM RATE OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING
FURLOUNDS PRIOR TO RELEASE COMPARED TO
THOSE RELEASED WITHOUT RECEIVING A
FURLOUGH

	WALPOLE		CONCORD		NORFOLK		FORESTRY		PRE-RELEASE		FRAMINGHAM		FRAMINGHAM		TOTAL	
	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR	N	RR
Recidivism Rate of In- dividuals not receiving furlough prior to release	72	25%	102	38%	33	15%	3	0%	12	67%	0		15	13%	237	30%
Recidivism Rate of In- dividuals who had re- ceived furloughs prior to release	64	19%	180	21%	97	20%	59	5%	214	12%	19	16%	41	10%	674	15%
Recidivism Rate of Total Population	136	22%	282	27%	130	19%	62	7%	226	12%	19	16%	56	11%	911	19%

RR = Recidivism Rate

Because the Department generally calculates Base Expectancy Tables separately for males and females, and because the furlough effect on the male population was in the opposite direction as the female population; we decided to apply the Base Expectancy test to the males and females separately. However, the very small size of the female population (only 15 females did not receive a furlough) made the validity of using Base Expectancy Tables questionable. We, therefore, decided to test the selection factor on the male population only.

Once constructed, the Base Expectancy Table was first used to calculate the Expected Recidivism Rate of the Total Male Releasee Population for the year 1974. Then this population was divided into two portions: a group consisting of all the individuals who received one or more furloughs; and a group consisting of all individuals who did not receive a furlough. Base Expectancy Rates were then calculated for each of these sub-groups. These calculations resulted in the following Expected Rates of Recidivism:

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS</u>	<u>EXPECTED RATE OF RECIDIVISM</u>	<u>ACTUAL RATE OF RECIDIVISM</u>
I All males released in 1973 who didn't receive a furlough	220	25.8%	31%
II All males released in 1973 who did receive a furlough	621	24.0%	16%
III Total Group of all males released in 1973	841	24.6%	20%

Several striking generalizations emerge from the above findings. First, the prediction device revealed that a selection bias had not, in fact, occurred. Individuals experiencing a furlough had an expected recidivism rate of 24% , individuals not receiving a furlough had a recidivism rate of 25.8%. The difference between these two figures is not statistically significant.

Secondly, it is noteworthy that the non-furlough group had an actual recidivism rate that was higher than its expected recidivism rate. By contrast, the furlough group had an actual recidivism rate that was considerably below its expected recidivism rate. This difference between the expected recidivism rate of the furlough group (24%) and the actual recidivism rate for the furlough group (16%) is statistically significant.

Thirdly, it is extremely important to note that the results of the previous year's releasee population showed that exact same trend with respected to differential recidivism rates on the furlough participation variable.

We therefore conclude, as we have in previous studies, that participation in the Furlough Program in Massachusetts significantly reduces the chances that an individual will recidivate upon his release from prison. Our analysis indicates that the reduction in recidivism is due to the impact of the Furlough Program and not to the types of inmates who were selected for furloughs.

We further conclude that the reduction in recidivism that has been recently occurring in Massachusetts, as documented earlier in this report, has been largely the result of the introduction of the Furlough Program and other Community Based Correctional Programs introduced in Massachusetts. These findings are clear and statistically significant.

VARIABLES FOUND TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN
RECIDIVISTS AND NON-RECIDIVISTS

As the final section of this report, analysis turned to a focus on the identification of specific personal background and criminal history variables that distinguished between individuals who recidivated and those who did not. All of the variables collected for the study were dichotomized so as to determine the best split for high and low recidivism risk categories. Those variables in which the best split was one that produced a statistically significant difference between high and low recidivism risk groups were selected for the discussion that follows.

Eight categories of variables were found to distinguish between the incidence of recidivism and non-recidivism. These categories are summarized in the following outline:

- I. Marital Status
- II. Employment History
- III. History of Known Drug Use
- IV. Criminal Career Pattern
 - (1) Number of Prior Court Appearances
 - (2) Number of Prior Court Appearances for Property Offenses
 - (3) Number of Prior Court Appearances for Narcotic Offenses
 - (4) Prior Incarceration as a Juvenile
 - (5) Prior Incarcerations in a County House of Correction
 - (6) Prior Incarcerations in an adult State or Federal Institution
 - (7) Prior Juvenile Paroles
 - (8) Prior Adult Paroles
- V. Age at Incarceration
- VI. Type of Offense
- VII. Security Status of Institution of Release
- VIII. Furlough History

Individuals who were married at the time of incarceration had significantly lower recidivism rates when released than those not married. Whereas those who were married at the time of incarceration had a recidivism rate of 13%, those not married had a recidivism rate of 21%.

Individuals who had worked at any one job seven months or longer had disproportionately lower rates of recidivism than individuals who had not held a job for more than 6 months. Whereas those who had previously held a job for 7 months or more had a recidivism rate of 14%, those who had not done so had a recidivism rate of 21%.

The collective category criminal career pattern revealed a strong indicator of high and low recidivism risk potential. Those individuals deeply embedded in a criminal career consistently had the highest rates of recidivism. This was measured by using the eight sub-categories of variables as indicators of criminal career pattern: as listed in the outline above. Individuals who had longer criminal records, measured by prior court appearances, were found to be higher recidivism risks. This was especially significant in the case of those individuals whose prior court appearances were for property offenses and/or narcotic offenses. Individuals who began their criminal career as a juvenile, measured by the serving of a juvenile incarceration and being followed on juvenile parole status, were higher recidivism risks. Finally, individuals who had previously served adult incarcerations in county houses of correction and/or in a state or federal facility and who had served on a prior adult parole status were higher recidivism risks. A summary of the specific nature of these relationships is presented below in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII

RECIDIVISM RISK POTENTIAL BY CRIMINAL CAREER PATTERN

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>LOW RISK CATEGORY</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RISK</u>	<u>HIGH RISK CATEGORY</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RISK</u>
(1) Number of Prior Court Appearances	12 or less appearances	16%	13 or more appearances	25%
(2) Number of Prior Court Appearances for Property Offenses	4 or less appearances	12%	5 or more appearances	26%
(3) Number of Prior Court Appearances for Narcotic Offenses	None	16%	one or more	23%
(4) Prior Incarceration as a Juvenile	None	15%	one or more	28%
(5) Prior Incarcerations in a county House of Correction	None	16%	one or more	23%
(6) Prior Incarcerations in a state or federal institution	None	17%	one or more	22%
(7) Prior Juvenile Paroles	None	16%	one or more	29%
(8) Prior Adult Paroles	None	17%	one or more	23%

Collectively the above measures of criminal career pattern delineate a high risk recidivism potential. This represents a finding consistent with previous recidivism studies conducted by the department.

The variable age at time of incarceration clearly points to the fact that the younger offender is the higher recidivism risk. Whereas the recidivism rate for individuals who were 23 or older at the time of the present incarceration was 12%; the recidivism rate for those who were 22 or younger was 26%.

The variable type of present offense, when separated into property and non-property categories, also defines high and low recidivism risk potentials. Whereas individuals whose present offense was a property offense had a recidivism rate of 26%, individuals whose present offense was a non-property offense had a recidivism rate of 17%.

As pointed out previously, (see pages 20-22 of this report) security level of releasing institution is strongly correlated with recidivism risk potential. Individuals released from minimum security institutions and from pre-release centers have the lowest risk potential (9% and 12% respectively); whereas individuals released directly from maximum security institutions have high recidivism risk potentials (26%).

Also as previously pointed out in this report (see pages 25-28), participation in the Furlough Program is a strong predictor of recidivism risk potential. It was found that individuals who had experienced at least one furlough had a recidivism rate of 15%, whereas those who had not experienced a furlough had a recidivism rate of 30%.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of the releasee population for the year 1974 has further substantiated a series of patterns uncovered in previous Departmental recidivism studies. The analysis of the releases in the 1973 for the first time provided evidence that the Furlough Program was associated with a reduction in recidivism rates. The present study further substantiates that finding. Several previous research studies have demonstrated that Pre-Release Centers are associated with a reduction in recidivism rates. The present study further substantiates those findings. Previous research studies by the Department have documented the fact that the gradual movement from maximum security to medium and minimum security institutions prior to release is associated with reduced recidivism. Again, the present study provides additional support to those findings.

Five years of recidivism research by the Department of Correction has collectively uncovered a series of patterns which we believe to have wide range theoretical and policy implications. Underlying these patterns is a common theme, one which deals with the specific process of reintegration through a system of graduated release. This system of graduated release contains components such as the Furlough Program, movement from maximum to medium to minimum security institutions, Pre-Release Centers, Work-Release Programs, and Education-Release Programs. The furlough program is important in that it may begin early in the period of incarceration and continues until release. It serves to maintain and strengthen societal links that existed before incarceration and provides an opportunity to establish new ties. Participation in pre-release centers during the final period of incarceration, especially when preceded by the broader process of movement from maximum to medium to minimum institutional security levels, functions as a process of gradually reintroducing the offender to the relative freedom in the community that he will experience at the time of final release. The work and education

release programs widely utilized by pre-release centers, and to a lesser extent in the medium and minimum security level institutions, play an important role in the reintegrative process. Education-release programs allow inmates to attend classes in a normal societal setting to increase their educational assets, work-release programs allow inmates to earn wages and gain job experience in the normal societal setting and have the additional benefits of establishing the normal societal pattern of paying taxes and retirement fees, paying room and board expenses, and providing opportunities to budget and save wages.

These programs provide a break from the traditional mode of incarceration. As stated in a previous recidivism study:

"Traditionally, we take an offender out of our society and place him in another social system - the prison - that in no way constructively resembles the society to which he will eventually return. Family ties, heterosexual relationships, economic roles, and political participation is served. In short, the individual enters the prison society and gradually loses touch with some of the most basic aspects of normal societal life. In prison, one is no longer expected to pay rent, to shop for and buy food; to pay taxes or contribute to a pension fund. One no longer has to budget a week's wage for there are no bills to pay. Medical bills, utility bills, all bills in fact are paid by the taxpayers in the outside society. It is no wonder then, that after a period of incarceration a tremendous shock is faced upon societal re-entry."

The major findings of the present study and other research conducted by the Department of Correction over the past five years has consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of the reintegrative programs and the general process of graduated release. Combined with the effects of the modification of the parole revocation process mandated by the Morrissey Vs. Brewer decision, the reintegrative programs have brought about a consistent reduction in the recidivism rates of releases from the Department of Correction. It is therefore believed that evidence supports the policy of continued and expanded reintegrative and graduated release programs.

FOOTNOTES

1. LeClair, Daniel P. An Analysis of Recidivism Among Residents Released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions During 1971, Massachusetts Department of Correction Research Publication #98, May, 1975.

2. LeClair, Daniel P. An Analysis of Recidivism Among Residents Released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions During the Year 1973, Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication No. 126, October, 1976.

3. LeClair, Daniel P. An Analysis of Recidivism Among Residents Released from Boston State and Shirley Pre-Release Centers During 1972-1973, Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication No. 100, August, 1976.

- Landolfi, Joseph, An Analysis of Recidivism Among Residents Released from the Pre-Release Centers Administered by Massachusetts Half-Way Houses, Inc., Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication No. 119, June, 1976.

- Landolfi, Joseph Charlotte House Pre-Release Center for Women: Profile of Participants and a Recidivism Follow-up, Massachusetts Department of Correction publication No. 125, October 1976.

- Landolfi, Joseph Roxbury Community Rehabilitation Center: A Profile of Participants and a Recidivism Follow-up, Massachusetts Department of Correction publication No. 130, March, 1977.

4. Landolfi, Joseph, An Analysis of Differential Rates of Recidivism for MCI-Walpole Commitments by Institution of Release, Massachusetts Department of Correction publication No. 114, May, 1976.

APPENDIX I

VARIABLES

A. COMMITMENT VARIABLES

1. Institution of Original Commitment
2. Number of Jail Credits
3. Age at Commitment
4. Present Offense (most serious charge)
5. Number of Charges Involved in Present Offense
6. Type of Sentence
7. Minimum Sentence
8. Maximum Sentence

B. PERSONAL BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS VARIABLES

1. Race
2. Marital Status
3. Military Service
4. Last Civilian Address
5. Emergency Addressee
6. Occupational Field
7. Length of Employment at Most Skilled Position
8. Longest Time Employed at Any One Job
9. Type of Education
10. Last Grade Completed
11. History of Drug Use

C. CRIMINAL HISTORY VARIABLES

1. Age at First Arrest
2. Age at First Drunk Arrest
3. Age at First Drug Arrest
4. Total Number of Court Appearances
5. Number of Court Appearances for Person Offenses
6. Number of Court Appearances for Property Offenses
7. Number of Court Appearances for Sex Offenses
8. Number of Court Appearances for Narcotic Offenses
9. Number of Court Appearances for Drunkenness Offenses
10. Number of Court Appearances for Escape Offenses
11. Number of Juvenile Commitments
12. Number of House Of Correction Commitments
13. Number of Prior State or Federal Commitments
14. Number of Juvenile Paroles
15. Number of Adult Paroles
16. Number of Juvenile Parole Violations
17. Number of Adult Parole Violations
18. Age at Release

D. FURLOUGH VARIABLES

1. Total Number of Furloughs
2. Total Number of Successful Furlough Outcomes
3. Total Number of Late-Under Furloughs
4. Total Number of Late-Over Furloughs
5. Total Number of Escape Furlough Outcomes
6. Total Number of Arrest Furlough Outcomes
7. Specific Institution Granting Furlough
8. Months Served Before Receiving First Furlough
9. Months Served Before First Furlough Escape

E. RECIDIVISM VARIABLES

1. Category of Return
2. New Arrests
3. Types of Parole Violation
4. Disposition of New Arrests
5. Date Returned to Custody
6. Date Parole Warrant Issued

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A. Commitment Variables

Most Serious Charge - Often an individual is committed for a number of different offenses or charges. In this table only the offense which received the longest prison sentence is presented.

Present Offense: Incidence of Various Charges - As opposed to Table A2, this table presents data regarding all offenses or charges involved in an individual's present commitment. If an individual is incarcerated for both Armed Robbery and B&E, the individual is included in each category. Thus the incidence total is greater than the number of individuals

A&B - Assault and Battery

D.W. - Dangerous Weapon

fem. - Female

f.u. - female under

w/child u. - with child under

B&E - Breaking and Entering

Com. & Notor. - Common and Notorious

Malic. Inj. - Malicious Injury

w/ND - Where Narcotic Drug

Induce Oth.to Vio. N.D. - Induce another to Violate Narcotic Drug Laws

w/int. - with intent

op. M.V. U/I N.D. - Operating a Motor Vehicle Under the Influence of a Narcotic Drug

Controlled Substance - a Substance (drug) whose manufacturing, dispensing or possession is controlled by statute

Class A - Includes Heroin, Cocaine

Class B - includes Methadone, Amphetamines

Class C - Includes Halucinogens

Other - includes a variety of offenses such as: Nonsupport, Polygamy, Gaming, Bribery, Contempt of Court, Abortion, Illegitimacy, Prostitution, Disturbing the Peace, and Motor Vehicle Offenses other than Larceny of a Motor Vehicle.

Number of Charges - The total number of charges involved in the present commitment. For example, if an individual is committed for Burglary, Arson and Assault, three charges are recorded. Charges should not be confused with courts. An individual may be committed on 16 counts for the single charge of Burglary.

Type of Sentence:

Simple - one sentence is being served

Concurrent - more than one sentence is being served (all served coterminous)

Aggregate - more than one sentence is being served but the sentences are added together and not served coterminous)

Forthwith - a sentence which supercedes an existing sentence

From and After - a sentence which began after an individual had been released from an existing sentence

Minimum Sentence

No Minimum - A sentence which has no minimum term specified.
All Concord commitments have no minimum sentence.
Most Framingham commitments have no minimum sentence.

B. Personal Background Characteristics Variables

Military Service Discharge

"DISCH." - Discharge

"GEN." - General

"DISCH. UNKNOWN" - Individuals who have served in the Armed Forces but whose type of discharge is unknown to Correctional authorities.

"Grade Equiv." - Grade Equivalency Diploma

"Spec. Ed." - Special Education Classes

"Inapplicable" - Individuals who were never in Special Education Classes or received a Grade Equivalency Diploma.

Occupational Field

Professional* - (e.g., lawyers, doctors, engineers, clergy).

Business/Managerial - ownership of management of a business valued at \$10,000 or more.

Clerical/Sales - (e.g., sales managers, life insurance sales, bookkeeper, clerks).

Skilled Manual - (e.g., master tradesman, machinist, factory foreman).

Semi-Skilled Manual - (e.g., apprentice craftsman, automobile mechanic, assembly line).

Unskilled Manual - labor tasks requiring little training or skill.

Service - (e.g., bartender, waiter, taxi driver, janitor).

Not Applicable - An individual who has never been arrested for drunkenness.

Not Applicable - An individual who has never been arrested for a drug offense.

C. Criminal History Variables

Court Appearances - A court appearance is an arrest which results in the individuals appearing in court several times before a final disposition is reached. Thus court appearances in this study does not indicate the number of times an individual has been in a court but rather the number of times an individual has gone through the criminal justice process, from arrest to final disposition.

* These categories were derived from a code scheme developed by Martin Hamburger, Teacher's College, Columbia University.